

pride to recognize August 7 as the anniversary of the Purple Heart award, and as Purple Heart Day. Today is a day to reflect and take great pride in being Americans. We must never forget the sacrifices all veterans have made in the name of freedom.

HONORING SANDY COVALL-ALVES  
OF SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 12, 2011*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, together with my colleague, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, to recognize Sandy Covall-Alves, who is retiring after three decades in the emergency management field. Throughout her 30 years of service, including 16 as Emergency Manager for Sonoma County's Fire and Emergency Services Department and the Sonoma County Operational Area, she dedicated herself to making sure that people in her charge were safe and received the

resources they needed in the wake of natural disasters.

During her tenure in Sonoma County, Ms. Covall-Alves coordinated the response, recovery and mitigation efforts for the 1995–1999 and 2006 winter storms and floods, the 1996 Cavedale fire and the 1998 Rio Nido debris flow. In total, she oversaw the implementation of 14 local emergency proclamations, 12 Emergency Operations Center activations, 8 gubernatorial proclamations and 6 events that were designated by the President to be national disasters.

Ms. Covall-Alves was also the guiding force in establishing, implementing and coordinating emergency programs for the country, its cities and special districts. Her commitment to improving emergency management did not stop at the county line. She is a founding member and current Chair of the California Operational Area Coalition (COAC), a forum for information exchange and advocacy on emergency management issues. The coalition's mission is to enhance closer cooperation and collaboration with its members and with the State Emergency Management Agency.

Ms. Covall-Alves began her career in emergency management as a 9–1–1 dispatcher for the Tuolumne County Sheriffs Department. After developing disaster recovery plans for private businesses, she returned to public service with the San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services and from there was deployed to the 1994 Northridge earthquake in Southern California as part of the state's mutual aid program. She joined the Sonoma County Office of Emergency Services in 1995 and quickly became an integral part of the county's response and recovery team. Our offices appreciated working with her, knowing that she was the consummate professional who could use all of her connections to develop a coordinated response.

Mr. Speaker, Sandy Covall-Alves has had a long and distinguished career in serving and protecting the people of the State of California. We wish her well in her retirement as she enjoys time with her husband, Ron Alves, and their three special pets, Beesley, Mowse and Wilson.